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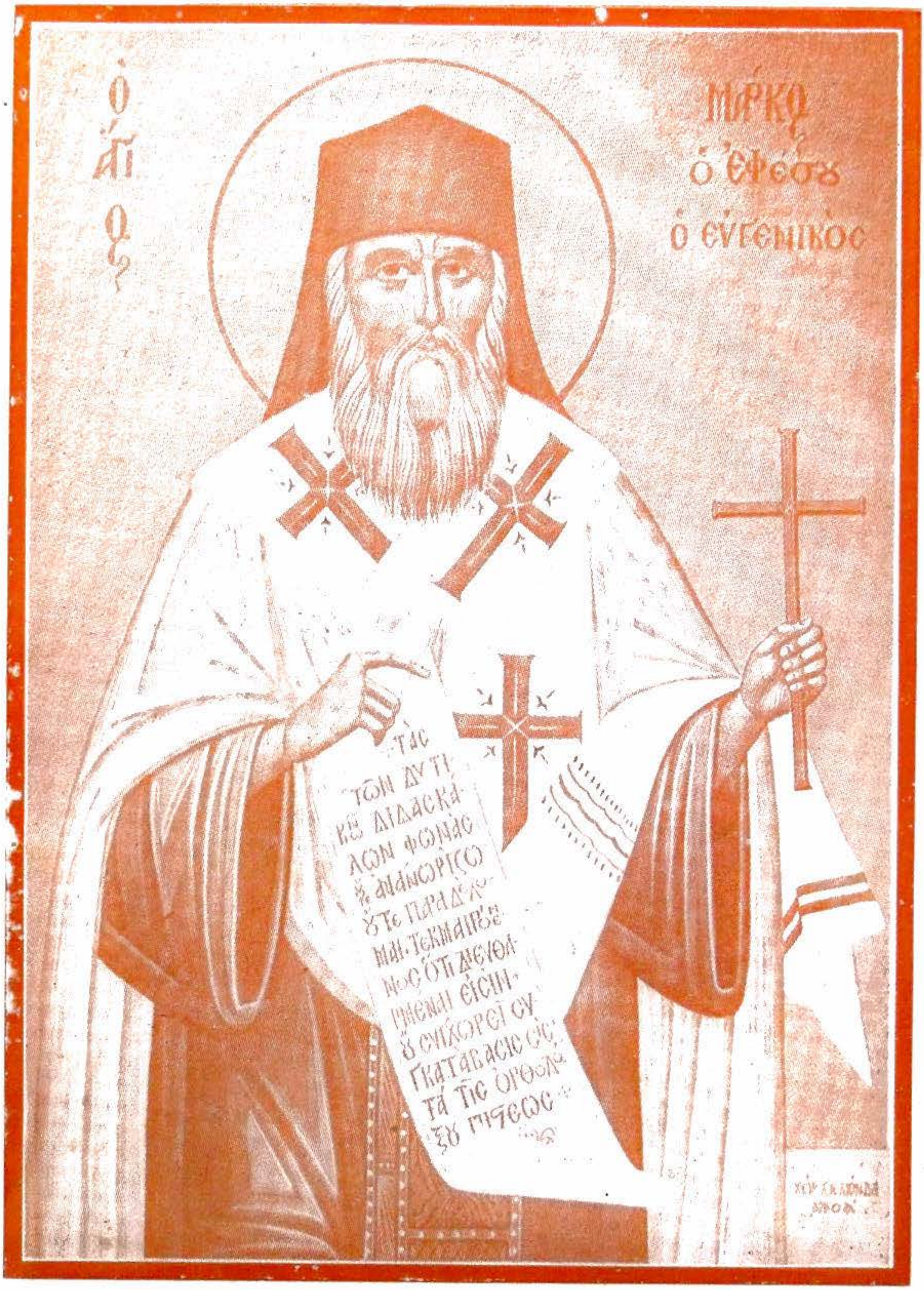

LETTERS

In this part of *The Orthodox Word* we share with our readers a few of the letters we receive, revealing — if only to a small degree — some of the Christian concerns and experiences of the "little flock" which tries to be faithful to Christ in these latter times. To facilitate a free expression of views, most of the letters are published without full signatures, but the names of all writers are known to the editors. All comments of the editors are in italics.

ORTHODOXY AND THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE

Orthdoxy and the Religion of the Future is the only publication of its kind I have ever seen. There are some publications (mostly by Evangelical Protestants) concerning the dangers of "Eastern" religions, but none of the ones I have seen explains (as your publication does) the extent to which these "theologies" have penetrated the theological thought of the mainline Christian denominations in the United States today. Also, such publications are very limited in their usefulness because they often use one heresy to refute another and the majority of our Orthodox laity are not sufficiently well informed about their Faith to be able to distinguish between Orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Your book fills a great need here. I only wish it could somehow be distributed to all Orthodox faithful in this country.

Seminarian C., Massachusetts

With special attention I read *The Orthodox Word* issue (no. 70) on "Christianity vs. Sorcery." Early this year I had received a catalog from a game company in Baltimore, Maryland. Looking through it, I was so shocked when I came across a small section marked "Occult Ritual Kits — not games — but 'how-to-do-it' kits that explain what the two fastest-rising 'religions' today are all about." They go on to list the two available: "BLACK MAGIK: offering you an experience into the realm of the spirit world. The kit comes complete with all symbols used in 'black magik,' explained in layman's terms . . . and shows you how 'black magik' has helped thousands to solve life's problems." The second kit is called "WITCHCRAFT: explained simply and truthfully in layman's terms. No — it is not a game. It is serious business for practitioners; but it can be fun too. The kit tells everything you should know concerning the actual real life practices of witchcraft, and how it has been used to serve the betterment of mankind."

I wrote a letter to the game company's president, asking that my name be removed from their mailing list and expressing how shocked and appalled I was that their company instructed its customers on how to enter into the realm of evil through a do-it-yourself method. I enclosed a copy of *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future,* marking certain pages, and in my letter expressing the hope that they will be read and that with this additional information they will stop offering these occult ritual kits, which can lead the customers to the loss of their

(Continued on inside back cover.)

THE ORTHODOX WORD

For the Mission of True Orthodox Christianity

Established with the blessing of His Eminence the late *John (Maximovitch)*, Archbishop of Western America and San Francisco, Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

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COVER: Icon of St. Mark of Ephesus, courtesy of "Astir" Publishing Company, Athens.

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SAINT MARK OF EPHESUS
+ 1441, Commemorated January 19

TROPARION, TONE 8
(Composed by the Saint's brother, John Eugenikos)

Instructor of Orthodoxy, fighter against innovations,* foundation-stone of faith, luminary of the Church, God-inspired seal of the Teachers,* O Mark all-wise, by thy writings thou hast enlightened all,* harp of the Spirit, pray to Christ God that our souls may be saved.

THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

APPENDIX
THE ORTHODOX TEACHING OF SAINT MARK OF EPHESUS ON THE STATE OF SOULS AFTER DEATH

THE ORTHODOX TEACHING on the state of souls after death is one that is often not fully understood, even by Orthodox Christians themselves; and the comparatively late Latin teaching of "purgatory" has caused further confusion in people's minds. The Orthodox doctrine itself, however, is not at all ambiguous or imprecise. Perhaps the most concise Orthodox exposition of it is to be found in the writings of St. Mark of Ephesus at the Council of Florence in 1439, composed precisely in order to answer the Latin teaching on "purgatory." These writings are especially valuable to us in that coming as they do from the last of the Byzantine Fathers, before the modern era with all its theological confusions, they both point us to the sources of the Orthodox doctrine and instruct us how to approach and understand these sources. These sources are: Scripture, Patristic homilies, church services, Lives of Saints, and certain revelations and visions of life after death, such as those contained in Book IV of the *Dialoguet* of St. Gregory the Great. Today's academic theologians tend to mistrust the latter two or three kinds of sources, which is why they are often uneasy when speaking on this subject and sometimes prefer to keep an "agnostic reticence' with regard to it (Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church,* p. 259.) St. Mark's writings, on the other hand, show us how much "at home" with these sources genuine Orthodox theologians are; those

who are "uncomfortable" with them perhaps reveal thereby an unsuspected infection with modern unbelief.

Of St. Mark's four replies on purgatory composed at the Council of Florence, the First Homily contains the most concise account of the Orthodox doctrine as against the Latin errors, and it is chiefly from it that this translation has been compiled. The other replies contain mostly illustrative material for the points discussed here, as well as answers to more specific Latin arguments.

The "Latin Chapters" to which St. Mark replies are those written by Julian Cardinal Cesarini (Russian translation in Pogodin, pp. 50-57), giving the Latin teaching, defined at the earlier "Union" Council of Lyons (1270), on the state of souls after death. This teaching strikes the Orthodox reader (as indeed it struck St. Mark) as one of an entirely too "literalistic" and "legalistic" character. The Latins by this time had come to regard heaven and hell as somehow "finished" and "absolute," and those in them as already possessing the fullness of the state they will have after the Last Judgment; thus, there is no need to pray for those in heaven (whose lot is already perfect) or those in hell (for they can never be delivered or cleansed from sin). But since many of the faithful die in a "middle" state — not perfect enough for heaven, but not evil enough for hell — the logic of the Latin arguments required a third place of cleansing ("purgatory"), where even those whose sins had already been forgiven had to be punished or give "satisfaction" for their sins before being sufficiently cleansed to enter heaven. These legalistic arguments of a purely human "justice" (which actually deny God's supreme goodness and love of mankind) the Latins proceeded to support by literalistic interpretations of certain Patristic texts and various visions; almost all of these interpretations are quite contrived and arbitrary, because not even the ancient Latin Fathers spoke of such a place as "purgatory," but only of the "cleansing" from sins after death, which some of them referred to (probably allegorically) as by "fire".

In the Orthodox doctrine, on the other hand, which St. Mark teaches, the faithful who have died with small sins unconfessed, or who have not brought forth fruits of repentance

for sins they have confessed, are cleansed of these sins either in the trial of death itself with its fear, or after death, when they are confined (but not permanently) in hell, by the prayers and Liturgies of the Church and good deeds performed for them by the faithful. Even sinners destined for eternal torment can be given a certain relief from their torment in hell by these means also. There is no fire tormenting sinners now, however, either in hell (for the eternal fire will begin to torment them only after the Last Judgment), or much less in any third place like "purgatory"; all visions of fire which are seen by men are as it were images or prophesies of what will be in the future age. All forgiveness of sins after death comes solely from the goodness of God, which extends even to those in hell, with the cooperation of the prayers of men, and no "payment" or "satisfaction" is due for sins which have been forgiven.

It should be noted that St. Mark's writings concern primarily the specific point of the *state* of souls after death, and barely touch on the history of the events that occur to the soul immediately after death. On the latter point there is an abundant Orhodox literature, but this point was not under discussion at Florence.

All notes have been added by the translators.

FIRST HOMILY of St. Mark of Ephesus

REFUTATION OF THE LATIN CHAPTERS CONCERNING PURGATORIAL FIRE*

INASMUCH AS WE are required, preserving our Orthodoxy and the church dogmas handed down by the Fathers, to answer with love to what you have said, as our general rule we shall first quote each argument and testimony which you have brought forward in writing, in order that the reply and resolution to each of them might then follow briefly and clearly.

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* Translated from the Russian translation of Archimandrite Amvrossy Pogodin, in *St. Mark of Ephesus and the Union of Florence*, Jordanville, N.Y., 1963, pp. 58-73.

1. And so, at the beginning of your report you speak thus: "If those who truly repent have departed this life in love (towards God) before they were able to give satisfaction by means of worthy fruits for their transgressions or offenses, their souls are cleansed after death by means of purgatorial sufferings; but for the easing (or 'deliverance') of them from these sufferings, they are aided by the help which is shown them on the part of the faithful who are alive, as for example: prayers, Liturgies, almsgiving, and other works of piety."

To this we answer the following: Of the fact that those reposed in faith are without doubt helped by the Liturgies and prayers and almsgiving performed for them, and that this custom has been in force from antiquity, there is the testimony of many and various utterances of the Teachers, both Latin and Greek, spoken and written at various times and in various places. But that souls are delivered thanks to a certain purgatorial suffering and temporal fire which possesses such (a purgatorial) power and has the character of a help — this we do not find either in the Scriptures or in the prayers and hymns for the dead, or in the words of Teachers. But we have received that even the souls which are held in hell and are already given over to eternal torments, whether in actual fact and experience or in hopeless expectation of such, can be aided and given a certain small help, although not in the sense of completely loosing them from torment or giving hope for a final deliverance. And this is shown from the words of the great Macarius the Egyptian ascetic who, finding a skull in the desert, was instructed by it concerning this by the action of Divine power.* And Basil the Great, in the prayers read

* In the "Alphabetical Collection" of sayings of the Desert Fathers, under "Macarius the Great," we read: "Abba Macarius said, Walking in the desert one day, I found the skull of a dead man, lying on the ground. As I was moving it with my stick, the skull spoke to me. I said to it, "Who are you?" The skull replied, "I was high priest of the idols and of the pagans who dwelt in this place; but you are Macarius, the Spirit-bearer. Whenever you take pity on those who are in torments, and pray for them, they feel a little respite.'" The skull further instructed St. Macarius concerning the torments of hell, concluding: "We have received a little mercy since we did not know God, but those who knew God and denied Him are down below us." (*The Sayings of the Desert Fathers,* tr. by Benedicta Ward, London, A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1975, pp. 115-6.)

at Pentecost, writes literally the following: "Who also, on this all-perfect and saving feast, art graciously pleased to accept propitiatory prayers for those who are imprisoned in hell, granting us a great hope of improvement for those who are imprisoned from the defilements which have imprisoned them, and that Thou wilt send down Thy consolation" (Third Kneeling Prayer at Vespers).

But if souls have departed this life in faith and love, while nevertheless carrying away with themselves certain faults, whether small ones over which they have not repented at all, or great ones for which — even though they have repented over them — they did not undertake to show fruits of repentance: such souls, we believe, must be cleansed from this kind of sins, but not by means of some purgatorial fire or a definite punishment in some place (for this, as we have said, has not at all been handed down to us). But some must be cleansed in the very departure from the body, thanks only to fear, as St. Gregory the Dialogist literally shows**; while others must be cleansed after the departure from the body, either while remaining in the same earthly place, before they come to worship God and are honored with the lot of the blessed, or — if their sins were more serious and bind them for a longer duration — they are kept in hell, but not in order to remain forever in fire and torment, but as it were in prison and confinement under guard.

All such ones, we affirm, are helped by the prayers and Liturgies performed for them, with the cooperation of the Divine goodness and love for mankind. This Divine cooperation immediately disdains and remits some sins, those committed out of human weakness, as Dionysius the Great (the Areopagite) says in the "Reflections on the Mystery of those Reposed in Faith" (in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy,* VII, 7); while other sins, after a certain time, by righteous judgments it either likewise releases and forgives — and that completely — or lightens the responsibility for them until that final Judgment. And therefore we see no necessity whatever for any

** In Book IV of the *Dialogues.*

other punishment or for a cleansing fire; for some are cleansed by fear, while others are devoured by the gnawings of conscience with more torment than any fire, and still others are cleansed only by the very terror before the Divine Glory and the uncertainty as to what the future will be. And that this is much more tormenting and punishing than anything else, experience itself shows, and St. John Chrysostom testifies to us in almost all or at least most of his moral homilies, which affirm this, as likewise does the divine ascetic Dorotheus in his homily "On the Conscience . . ."

2. And so, we entreat God and believe to deliver the departed from (eternal torment), and not from any other torment or fire apart from those torments and that fire which have been proclaimed to be forever. And that, moreover, the souls of the departed are delivered by prayer from confinement in hell, as if from a certain prison, is testified, among many others, by Theophanes the Confessor, called the Branded (for the words of his testimony for the Icon of Christ, words written on his forehead, he sealed by blood). In one of the canons for the reposed he thus prays for them: "Deliver, O Saviour, Thy slaves who are in the hell of tears and sighing" (Octoechos, Saturday canon for the reposed, Tone 8, Canticle 6, Glory).

Do you hear? He said "tears" and "sighing," and not any kind of punishment or purgatorial fire. And if there is to be encountered in these hymns and prayers any mention of fire, it is not a temporal one that has a purgatorial power, but rather that eternal fire and unceasing punishment. The saints, being moved by love for mankind and compassion for their fellow countrymen, desiring and daring what is almost impossible, pray for the deliverance of those departed in faith. For thus does St. Theodore the Studite, the confessor and witness of the truth himself, say, at the very beginning of his canon for the departed: "Let us all entreat Christ, performing a memorial today for those dead from the ages, that He might deliver from eternal fire those departed in faith and in hope of eternal life" (*Lenten Triodion,* Meat-Fare Saturday, Canon, Canticle 1). And then, in another troparion, in Canticle 5 of

the Canon, he says: "Deliver, O our Saviour, all who have died in faith from the ever-scorching fire, and unillumined darkness, the gnashing of teeth, and the eternally-tormenting worm, and all torment."

Where is the "purgatorial fire" here? And if it in fact existed, where would it be more appropriate for the Saint to speak of it, if not here? Whether the saints are heard by God when they pray for this is not for us to search out. But they themselves knew, as did the Spirit dwelling in them by Whom they were moved, and they spoke and wrote in this knowledge; and likewise the Master Christ knew this, Who gave the commandment that we should pray for our enemies, and Who prayed for those who were crucifying Him, and inspired the First Martyr Stephen, when he was being stoned to death, to do the same. And although someone might say that when we pray for such people we are not heard by God, still we shall do everything that depends on us. And behold, some of the saints who prayed not only for the faithful, but even for the impious, were heard and by their prayers rescued them from eternal torment, as for example the First Woman-martyr Thecla rescued Falconila, and the divine Gregory the Dialogist, as it is related, rescued the Emperor Trajan.*

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* The latter incident is related in some of the early Lives of St. Gregory, as for example in an 8th-century English Life: "Some of our people also tell a story related by the Romans of how the soul of the Emperor Trajan was refreshed and even baptised by St. Gregory's tears, a story marvelous to tell and marvelous to hear. Let no one be surprised that we say he was baptised, for without baptism none will ever see God; and a third kind of baptism is by tears. One day as he was crossing the Forum, a magnificent piece of work for which Trajan is said to have been responsible, he found on examining it carefully that Trajan, though a pagan, had done a deed so charitable that it seemed more likely to have ben the deed of a Christian than of a pagan. For it is related that, as he was leading his army in great haste against the enemy, he was moved to pity by the words of a widow, and the emperor of the whole world came to a halt. She said, 'Lord Trajan, here are the men who killed my son and are unwilling to pay me recompense.' He answered: 'Tell me about it when I return and I will make them recompense you.' But she replied, 'Lord, if you never return, there will be no one to help me.' Then, armed as he was, he made the defendants pay forthwith the compensation they owed her, in his presence. When Gregory discovred this story, he recognized that this was just what we read about in the Scriptures, *Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord.* Since Gregory did not know what to do

To this we say the following, and pay heed how simple and at the same time how just this is: it is generally acknowledged that the remission of sins is at the same time also a deliverance from punishment; for the one who receives remission of them at the same time is delivered from the punishment owed for them. Remission is given in three forms and at different times: (1) during Baptism; (2) after Baptism, through conversion and sorrow and making up (for sins) by good works in the present life; and (3) after death, through prayers and good deeds and thanks to whatever else the Church does for the dead.

Thus, the first remission of sins is not at all bound up with labor; it is common to all and equal in honor, like the pouring out of light and the beholding of the sun and the changes of the seasons of the year, for this is grace alone and of us is asked nothing else but faith. But the second remission is painful, as for one who *every night washes his bed, and with tears waters his couch* (Ps. 6:5), for whom even the traces of the blows of sin are painful, who goes weeping and with contrite face and emulates the conversion of the Ninevites and the humility of Manasses, upon which there was mercy. The third remission is also painful, for it is bound up with repentance and a conscience that is contrite and suffers from insufficiency of good; however, it is not at all mixed with punishment, if it is a remission of sins: for remission and punishment can by no means exist together. Moreover, in the first and last remission of sins the grace of God has the larger part, with the cooperation of prayer, and very little is brought in by us. The middle remission, on the other hand, has little from grace, while the greater part is owing to our labor. The first remission of sins is distinguished from the last by this; that the first is a remission of all sins in an equal degree, while the last is a remission only of those sins which are not mortal and over which a person has repented in life.

Thus does the Church of God think, and when entreating for the departed the remission of sins and believing that it is granted them, it does not define as a law any kind of punishment with relation to them, knowing well that the Divine goodness in such matters conquers the idea of justice.

5. Thirdly, (let us take) the passage from the first epistle of the Blessed Paul to the Corinthians, in which he, speaking of the building on the foundation, which is Christ, of *gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble,* adds: *For that day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire* (I Cor. 3:11-15). This citation, it would seem, more than any other introduces the idea of purgatorial fire; but in actual fact it more than any other refutes it.

First of all, the Divine Apostle called it not a purgatorial, but a proving (fire); then he declared that through it good and honorable works also must pass, and such, it is clear, have no need of any cleansing; then he says that those who bring evil works, after these works burn, suffer loss, whereas those who are being cleansed not only suffer no loss, but acquire even more; then he says that this must be on "that day", namely, the day of Judgment and of the future age, whereas to suppose the existence of a purgatorial fire after that fearful Coming of the Judge and the final sentence — is this not a total absurdity? For the Scripture does not transmit to us anything of the sort, but He Himself Who will judge us says: *And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life* (Matt. 25:46): and again: *They shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment* (John 5:29). Therefore, there remains no kind of intermediate place; but after He divided all those under judgment into two parts, placing some on the right and others on the left, and calling the first "sheep" and the second "goats" — He did not at all declare that there are any who are to be cleansed by that fire. It would seem that the fire of which the Apostle speaks is the same as that of which the Prophet David speaks: *Fire shall blaze before Him, and round about Him shall there be a mighty tempest* (Ps. 49:4); and again: *Fire shall go before Him, and shall burn up His ene-*

mies round about (Ps. 96:3). Daniel the Prophet also speaks about this fire: *A stream of fire issued and came forth from before Him* (Daniel 7:10).

Since the saints do not bring with them any evil work or evil mark, this fire manifests them as even brighter, as gold tried in the fire, or as the stone amianthus, which, as it is related, when placed in fire appears as charred, but when taken out of the fire becomes even cleaner, as if washed with water, as were also the bodies of the Three Youths in the Babylonian furnace. Sinners, however, who bring evil with themselves, are seized as a suitable material for this fire and are immediately ignited by it, and their "work," that is, their evil disposition or activity, is burned and utterly destroyed and they are deprived of what they brought with them, that is, deprived of their burden of evil, while they themselves are "saved" — that is, will be preserved and kept forever, so that they might not be subjected to destruction together with their evil.

6. The divine Father Chrysostom also (who is called by us "the lips of Paul," just as the latter is "the lips of Christ") considers it necessary to make such an interpretation of this passage in his commentary on the Epistle (Homily 9 on First Corinthians); and Paul speaks through Chrysostom, as was made clear thanks to the vision of Proclus, his disciple and the successor of his See.* St. Chrysostom devoted a special treatise to this one passage, so that the Origenists would not quote these words of the Apostle as confirmation of their way of thought (which, it would seem, is more fitting for them than for you), and would not cause harm to the Church by introducing an end to the torment of hell and a final restoration *(apocatastasis)* of sinners. For the expression that the sinner *is saved as through fire* signifies that he will remain tormented in fire and will not be destroyed together with his evil works and evil disposition of soul.

Basil the Great also speaks of this in the "Morals," in

(Continued on page 87.)

* It is related in the Life of St. Proclus (Nov. 20) that when St. Chrysostom was working on his commentaries on St. Paul's epistles, St. Proclus saw St. Paul himself bending over St. Chrysostom and whispering into his ear.

The Place of BLESSED AUGUSTINE in the Orthodox Church

BY GOD'S PROVIDENCE, in our own times Orthodox Christianity has been returning to the West which departed from it some 900 years ago. At first largely the unconscious work of emigrants from Orthodox lands, this movement has lately been recognized as a great opportunity for inhabitants of the West itself; for some decades this movement of Western converts to Orthodoxy has been increasing and it has now become quite a common phenomenon.

As Orthodoxy has thus gradually been sinking new roots in the West and becoming once again "indigenous" to these lands, among Western converts there has been a natural increase of awareness of the earlier Orthodox heritage of the West, and particularly of the Saints and Fathers of the early Christian centuries, many of whom are in no way inferior to their Eastern counterparts of the same centuries, and all of whom breathe the air and give off the fragrance of the true Christianity which was so tragically lost in the later West. The love and veneration of Archbishop John Maximovitch (+1966) for these Western Saints has especially served to awaken interest in them and facilitate their "re-absorption," as it were, into the mainstream of Orthodoxy.

With regard to most of the Saints of the West there have been no problems; as their lives and writings have been rediscovered, there has been only

rejoicing among Orthodox Christians to find that the full spirit of Eastern Christianity was once so much a part of the West. Indeed, this rediscovery only bodes well for the continued development of a sound and balanced Orthodoxy in the West.

But with regard to a few Western Fathers there have been some "complications," owing especially to some of the dogmatic disputes in the early Christian centuries; the evaluations of these Fathers have differed in East and West, and for Orthodox Christians it is essential to know their significance in *Orthodox* eyes rather than in later Roman Catholic eyes.

The most eminent of these "controversial" Fathers in the West is, without doubt, Blessed Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa. Regarded in the West as one of the most important Fathers of the Church, and as the paramount "Doctor of Grace," he has always been regarded with some reserve in the East. In our own days, especially among Western converts to Orthodoxy, there have arisen two opposite and extreme views of him. One view, influenced by Roman Catholic opinions, sees rather more importance in him as a Father of the Church than the Orthodox Church has given him in the past; while the other view has tended to underestimate his Orthodox importance, some even going so far as to call him a "heretic." Both of these are Western views, not rooted in Orthodox tradition. The Orthodox view of him, on the other hand, held consistently down the centuries by the Holy Fathers of the East and (in the early centuries) of the West as well, goes to neither extreme, but is a balanced appraisal of him with due credit given both to his unquestioned greatness and to his faults.

In what follows we shall give a brief historical summary of the Orthodox evaluation of Blessed Augustine, emphasizing the attitude of various Holy Fathers toward him and going into details of his controversial teachings only where this is necessary to make clearer the Orthodox attitudes towards him. This historical investigation will also serve to bring out the Orthodox approach to such "controversial" figures in general. Where Orthodox dogmas are directly attacked, the Orthodox Church and her Fathers have always responded quickly and decisively, with correct dogmatic definitions and anathematizations of those who believe wrongly; but where the matter is one (even though on dogmatic subjects) of differing approaches, even of distortions or exaggerations or well-meaning errors, the Church has always had a moderate and conciliating attitude. The Church's attitude toward heretics is one thing; her attitude toward Holy Fathers who happen to have erred in some point or other, is quite another. We shall see this in some detail in what follows.

THE CONTROVERSY OVER GRACE AND FREE WILL

THE MOST HEATED of the controversies surrounding Blessed Augustine, both during his lifetime and afterwards, was that of grace and free will. Without doubt, Blessed Augustine was led into a distortion of the Orthodox doctrine of grace by a certain *over-logicalness* which he possessed in common with the Latin mentality, to which he belonged by culture if not by blood. (By blood he was African, and he had something of the emotional "heat" of southern peoples.) The 19th-century Russian Orthodox philosopher Ivan Kireyevsky has well summed up the Orthodox view of this point, which accounts for most of the deficiencies of Blessed Augustine's theology. "No single ancient or modern Father of the Church showed such love for the logical chain of truths as Blessed Augustine . . . Certain of his works are, as it were, a single iron chain of syllogisms, inseparably joined link to link. Perhaps because of this he was sometimes carried too far, not noticing the inward onesidedness of his thinking because of its outward order; so much so that, in the last years of his life, he himself had to write refutations of some of his earlier statements."*

Concerning the doctrine of grace in particular, the most concise evaluation of Augustine's teaching and its deficiencies is perhaps that of Archbishop Philaret of Chernigov in his textbook of Patrology: "When the monks of Hadrumetum (in Africa) presented to Augustine that, according to his teaching, the obligation of asceticism and self-mortification was not required of them, Augustine felt the justice of the remark and began more often to repeat that grace does not destroy freedom; but such an expression of his teaching changed essentially nothing in Augustine's theory, and his very last works were not in accord with this thought. Relying on his own experience of a difficult rebirth by means of grace, he was carried along by a feeling of its further consequences. Thus, as an accuser of Pelagius, Augustine is without doubt a great teacher of the Church; but in defending the truth, he himself was not completely and not always faithful to the truth."**

Later historians have often emphasized the points of disagreement between Blessed Augustine and St. John Cassian (Augustine's contemporary in Gaul, who in his celebrated *Institutes* and *Conferences* gave for the first time in Latin the full and authentic Eastern doctrine of monasticism and spiritual life;

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* "On the Character of European Civilization," in *Complete Works of I. V. Kireyevsky,* Moscow, 1911, in Russian, vol. 1, pp. 188-189.

** Archbishop Philaret of Chernigov, *Historical Teaching of the Fathers of the Church,* in Russian, St. Petersburg, 1882, vol. 3, pp. 33-34.

he was the first in the West to criticize Blessed Augustine's teaching on grace); but such historians have often not sufficiently seen the deeper basic agreement between them. Some modern historians (A. Harnack, O. Chadwick) have tried to correct this shortsightedness by showing the supposed "influence" of Augustine on Cassian; and this observation, although it is also exaggerated, points us a little closer to the truth. Probably St. Cassian would not have spoken so eloquently and so in detail on the subject of God's grace if Augustine had not already been teaching his own one-sided doctrine. But the important thing to bear in mind here is that the disagreement between Cassian and Augustine was not one between Orthodox Father and heretic (as was, for example, the disagreement between Augustine and Pelagius), but rather one between two Orthodox Fathers who disagreed only in the details of their presentation of one and the same doctrine. *Both* St. Cassian and Blessed Augustine were attempting to teach the Orthodox doctrine of grace and free will as against the heresy of Pelagius; but one did so with the full depth of the Eastern theological tradition, while the other was led into a certain distortion of this same teaching owing to his overly-logical approach to it.

Everyone knows that Blessed Augustine was the most outspoken opponent in the West of the heresy of Pelagius, which denied the necessity of God's grace for salvation; but few seem to be aware that St. Cassian (whose teaching was given by modern Roman Catholic scholars the most unjust name of "Semi-Pelagianism") was himself a no less fierce enemy of Pelagius and his teaching. In his final work, *Against Nestorius,* St. Cassian closely connects the teachings of Nestorius and Pelagius (both of whom were condemned by the Third Ecumenical Council at Ephesus in 431) and vehemently castigates them together, accusing Nestorius of "breaking out into such wicked and blasphemous impieties that you seem in this madness of yours to surpass even Pelagius himself, who surpassed almost everyone else in impiety" (*Against Nestorius,* V, 2). In this book also St. Cassian quotes at length the document of the Pelagian presbyter Leporius of Hippo wherein the latter publicly recants his heresy; this document, which, St. Cassian states, contains the "confession of faith of all Catholics" as against the Pelagian heresy, was approved by the bishops of Africa (including Augustine) and was probably written by Augustine himself, who was personally responsible for the conversion of Leporius (*Against Nestorius,* I, 5-6). In another passage of the same book (VII, 27), St. Cassian quotes Blessed Augustine as one of his chief Patristic authorities on the doctrine of the Incarnation (but with a qualification that will be mentioned below). Clearly, in defense of Orthodoxy, and in particular against the Pelagian heresy, Cassian and Augus-

tine were on the same side; it was only in the details of their defense that they differed.

The fundamental error of Augustine was his *overstatement* of the place of grace in Christian life, and his *understatement* of the place of free will. He was forced to this exaggeration, as Archbishop Philaret has well said, by his own experience of conversion, joined to the over-logicalness of his Latin mind which caused him to attempt to define this question too precisely. Never, however, did Augustine *deny* free will; indeed, when questioned he would always defend it and censure those who "are extolling grace to such an extent that they deny the freedom of the human will and, what is more serious, assert that on the day of judgment God will not render to every man according to his deeds" (Letter 214, to Abbot Valentinus of Hadrumetum). In some of his writings his defense of free will is no less strong than that of St. Cassian. In his commentary on Psalm 102, for example ("Who healeth all thy diseases"), Augustine writes: "He will heal you, but you must wish to be healed. He heals entirely whoever is infirm, but not him who refuses healing." The very fact that Augustine himself was a monastic Father of the West, founded his own monastic communities for both men and women, and wrote influential monastic Rules, certainly indicates that in actual practice he understood the significance of ascetic sruggle, which is unthinkable without free will. In general, therefore and especially whenever he must give practical advice to Christian strugglers, Augustine does indeed teach the Orthodox doctrine of grace and free will — as well as he can within the limitations of his theological viewpoint.

But in his formal treatises, especially the anti-Pelagian treatises which took up the last years of his life, when he enters upon a logical discussion of the whole question of grace and free will, he is often drawn away into an exaggerated defense of grace which seems to leave little actual place for human freedom. Let us here contrast several aspects of his teaching with the fully Orthodox teaching of St. John Cassian.

In his treatise "On Rebuke and Grace," written in 426 or 427 for the monks of Hadrumetum, Blessed Augustine writes (ch. 17): "Will you dare to say that even when Christ prayed that Peter's faith might not fail, it would still have failed if Peter had willed it to fail? As if Peter could in any measure will otherwise than Christ had wished for him that he might will." There is an obvious exaggeration here; one feels that there is something *missing* from Augustine's description of the reality of grace and free will. St. John Cassian, in his words on the other chief of the Apostles, St. Paul, supplies this "missing dimension" for us: "He says: *And His grace in me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, and yet not I, but the grace of God with me* (I Cor. 15:10). When he says *I labored,* he shows the effort of his own will; when he says *yet not I, but the grace of God,* he points out the value of

Divine protection; when he says *with me,* he affirms that grace cooperates with him when he is not idle or careless, but working and making an effort" (*Conferences,* XIII, 13). Cassian's position is balanced, giving proper emphasis to both grace and freedom; Augustine's position is one-sided and incomplete, unnecessarily over-emphasizing grace and thus laying his words open to exploitation by later thinkers who did not think in Orthodox terms at all and could thus conceive (as in 17th-century Jansenism) of an "irresistible grace" which man must accept whether he will or not.

A similar exaggeration was made by Augustine with regard to what later Latin theologians were to call "prevenient grace" — the grace that "prevents" or "comes before" and inspires the arousal of faith in a man. Augustine admits that he himself thought wrongly on this subject before his ordination as bishop: "I was in a similar error, thinking that the faith whereby we believe on God is not God's gift, but that it is in us from ourselves, and that by it we obtain the gifts of God, whereby we may live temperately and righteously and piously in this world. For I did not think that faith was preceded by God's grace . . . but that we should consent when the gospel was preached to us I thought was our own doing and came to us from ourselves" ("On the Predestination of the Saints," ch. 7). This youthful error of Augustine is indeed Pelagian, and is the result of an over-logicalness in the defense of free will, making it something autonomous rather than something that *cooperates* with God's grace; but he incorrectly ascribes it to St. Cassian (who was also wrongly accused in the West of teaching that God's grace is given in accordance with human merit), and Augustine himself then fell into the opposite exaggeration of ascribing *everything* in the awakening of faith to Divine grace.

The true teaching of St. Cassian, on the other hand, which is the teaching of the Orthodox Church, was something of a mystification to the Latin mind. We may see this in a follower of Blessed Augustine in Gaul, Prosper of Aquitaine, who was the first to attack St. Cassian directly.

It was to Prosper, together with a certain Hilary (not St. Hilary of Arles, who was in agreement with St. Cassian) that Augustine sent his final two anti-Pelagian treatises, "On the Predestination of the Saints" and "On the Gift of Perseverance"; in these works Augustine criticized the ideas of St. Cassian as they had been presented to him in a summary made by Prosper. After Augustine's death in 430, Prosper stepped forth as the champion of his teaching in Gaul, and his first major act was to write a treatise "Against the Author of the Conferences" (*Contra Collatorum*), also known as "On the Grace of God and Free Will." This treatise is nothing but a step-by-step refutation of St. Cassian's famous thirteenth Conference, where the question of grace is treated in most detail.

From the very first lines it is clear that Prosper is deeply offended that his teacher has been openly criticized in Gaul: "There are some bold enough to assert that the grace of God, by which we are Christians, was not correctly defended by Bishop Augustine of holy memory; nor do they cease to attack with unbridled calumnies his books composed against the Pelagian heresy" (ch. 1). But most of all Prosper is exasperated at what he finds to be a baffling "contradiction" in Cassian's teaching; and this perplexity of his (since he is a faithful disciple of Augustine) reveals to us the nature of Augustine's error.

Prosper finds that in one part of his thirteenth Conference Cassian teaches "correctly" about grace (and in paricular about "prevenient grace") — i.e., just like Blessed Augustine. "This doctrine was not at the outset of the discussion at variance with true piety, and would have deserved a just and honorable commendation had it not, in its dangerous and pernicious progress, deviated from its initial correctness. For, after the comparison of the farmer, to whom he likened the example of one living under grace and faith, and whose work he said was fruitless unless he were aided in all things by the Divine succour, he introduced the very Catholic proposition, saying, 'From which it is clearly deduced that the beginning not only of our acts, but also of our good thoughts, is from God; He it is Who inspires in us the beginnings of a holy will and gives us the power and capacity to carry out those things which we rightly desire' . . . Again, later on, when he had taught that all zeal for virtue required the grace of God, he aptly added: 'Just as all these things cannot continually be desired by us without the Divine inspiration, likewise without His help they can in no way be brought to completion' " (*Contra Collatorum,* ch. 2:2).

But then, after these and similar quotations which do, indeed, reveal St. Cassian as a teacher of the universality of grace no less eloquent than Blessed Augustine (this is why some think he was "influenced" by Augustine), Prosper continues: "At this point, by a sort of inscrutable contradiction, there is introduced a proposition in which it is taught that many come to grace without grace, and that some also, from the endowments of the free will, have this desire to seek, to ask and to knock . . ." (ch. 2:4). (That is, he accuses St. Cassian of the same error which Blessed Augustine admits that he himself had made in his earlier years.) "O Catholic teacher, why do you forsake your profession, why do you turn to the cloudy darkness of falsity and depart from the light of the clearest truth? . . . On your part there is complete agreement with neither the heretics nor the Catholics. The former regard the beginnings in every just work of man as belonging to the free will; while we (Catholics) constantly believe that the beginnings of good thoughts spring from God. You have found some indescribable third alternative, unacceptable to both sides, by which you neither

find agreement with the enemies nor retain an understanding with us" (chs. 2:5, 3:1).

It is precisely this "indescribable third alternative" that is the *Orthodox* doctrine of grace and free will, later to be known by the name of *synergism,* the *cooperation* of Divine grace and human freedom, neither one acting independently or autonomously. St. Cassian, faithful to the fullness of this truth, expresses sometimes the one side (human freedom) and sometimes the other (Divine grace); to Prosper's overly-logical mind this is an "inscrutable contradiction." St. Cassian teaches: "What is it that is said to us, unless in all these (Scriptural quotations) there is a declaration both of the grace of God and the freedom of our will, because even of his own activity a man can be led to the quest of virtue, but always stands in need of the help of the Lord?" (*Conferences,* XIII, 9). "Which depends on which is a considerable problem: namely, whether God is merciful to us because we have presented the beginning of a good will, or we receive the beginning of a good will because God is merciful. Many, believing these individually and affirming more than is right, are caught in many and opposite errors" (*Conferences,* XIII, 11). "For these two, that is, both grace and free will, seem indeed to be contrary to each other; but both are in harmony. And we conclude that, because of piety, we should accept both, lest taking one of these away from man, we appear to violate the Church's rule of faith" (*Conferences,* XIII, 11).

What a profound and serene answer to a question which Western theologians (not only Blessed Augustine) have never been able to answer adequately! To *Christian experience,* and in particular to the monastic experience from which St. Cassian speaks, there is no "contradiction" at all in the cooperation of freedom and grace; it is only human logic that finds the "contradiction" when it tries to understand this question much too abstractly and divorced from life. The very way in which Blessed Augustine, as opposed to St. Cassian, expresses the difficulty of this question, is a revelation of the difference in the depth of their answers. Augustine merely acknowledges that this is "a question which is very difficult and intelligible to few" (Letter 214, to Abbot Valentinus of Hadrumetum), hereby indicating that for him it is a puzzling *intellectual* question; whereas for St. Cassian it is a profound mystery whose truth is known in experience. At the end of his thirteenth Conference St. Cassian indicates that in his doctrine he follows "all the Catholic Fathers who have taught perfection of heart not by empty disputes of words, but in deed and act" (such references to "empty disputes" are the closest he allows himself to come to actual criticism of the eminent Bishop of Hippo); and he concludes this whole Conference on the "synergy" of grace and freedom with these words: "If any more

subtle inference of man's argumentation and reasoning seems opposed to this interpretation, it should be avoided rather than brought forward to the destruction of the faith; for how God works all things in us and yet everything can be ascribed to free will cannot be fully grasped by the mind and reason of man" (*Conferences,* XIII, 18).

THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION

THE MOST SERIOUS of the exaggerations into which Blessed Augustine fell in his teaching on grace is to be found in his idea of *predestination.* This is the idea for which he is most often attacked, and it is the one idea in his works which, when grossly misunderstood, has produced the most frightful consequences in unbalanced minds no longer restrained by the orthodoxy of his thought in general. It should be kept in mind, however, that for most people today the word "predestination" is usually understood in its later Calvinistic meaning (see below), and those who have not studied the question are sometimes inclined to accuse Augustine himself of the same monstrous heresy. It must be stated at the outset of this discussion, then that Blessed Augustine most certainly did not teach "predestination" as most people understand it today; what he did — as with the rest of his doctrine on grace — was to teach the *Orthodox* doctrine of predestination in an exaggerated way which was easily liable to misinterpretation.

The Orthodox concept of predestination is found in the teaching of St. Paul: *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son . . . and whom He predestined, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified* (Rom. 8:29-30). Here St. Paul speaks of those foreknown and fore-ordained (predestined) by God for eternal glory, it being understood, in the whole context of Christian teaching, that this predestination involves also the free choice of the one being saved; here again we see the mystery of synergy, the cooperation of God and man. St. John Chrysostom writes in his Commentary on this passage (Homily 15 on Romans): "The Apostle here speaks of foreknowledge in order that not everything should be ascribed to the calling . . . For if the calling alone was sufficient, then why have not all been saved? Therefore he says that the salvation of the called is accomplished not by the calling alone, but also by foreknowledge, and the calling itself is not compulsory or forcible. Thus, all were called, but not all obeyed." And Bishop Theophan the Recluse explains yet further: "Concerning free creatures, (God's predestination) does not obstruct their freedom and does not make them involuntary executors of his

decrees. Free actions God foresees as free; He sees the whole course of a free person and the general sum of all his actions. And seeing this, he decrees as if it had already been accomplished . . . It is not that the actions of free persons are the consequence of predestination, but that predestination itself is the consequence of free deeds" (*Commentary on Romans,* chapters 1 to 8, in Russian, Moscow, 1890, p. 532).

However, Augustine's over-logicalness required him to try to look too closely into this mystery and "explain" its seeming difficulties for ordinary logic. (If one is in the number of the "predestined," does he need to struggle for his salvation? If he is not in their number, can he give up struggling altogether?) We need not follow him in his reasonings, except to note that he himself felt the difficulty of his position and found it often necessary to justify himself and qualify his teaching so that it would not be "misunderstood." In his treatise "On the Gift of Perseverance," indeed, he notes: "And yet this doctrine must not be preached to congregations in such a way as to seem to an unskilled multitude, or a people of slower understanding, to be in some measure confuted by that very preaching of it" (ch. 57) — surely a remarkable admission of the "complexity" of basic Christian doctrine! The "complexity" of this doctrine (which, incidentally, is often felt by Western converts to the Orthodox faith, until they have acquired some experience in actual living according to Orthodoxy), resides only in those who have tried to "resolve" it intellectually; the Orthodox teaching of the cooperation of God and man, of the necessity of ascetic struggle, and of the certain will of God that *all* may be saved (I Tim. 2:4), is sufficient to dissolve the unnecssary complications which human logic introduces into this question.

Augustine's intellectualized view of predestination, as he already realized, tended to produce erroneous opinions concerning grace and free will in the minds of some of his hearers. These opinions had apparently become common within a few years of Augustine's death, and one of the great Fathers of Gaul found it necessary to combat them. *St. Vincent of Lerins,* a theologian of the great island monastery off the southern coast of Gaul that was noted for its fidelity to Eastern doctrines in general, and to St. Cassian's teaching on grace in particular, wrote his *Commonitory* in 434 in order to combat the "profane novelties" of various heresies which had been attacking the Church. Among these novelties, he censured the view of one group who "dare to promise in their teaching that in *their* church — that is, in their own small circle — is to be found a great and special and entirely personal form of divine grace; that it is divinely administered, without any pain, zeal, or effort on their part, to all persons belonging to their group, even if they do not ask or seek or knock. Thus,

borne up by angels' hands — that is, preserved by angelic protection — they can never *dash their foot against a stone,* that is, they never can be scandalized" (*Commonitory,* ch. 26).

There is another work of this time which contains similar criticisms: "The Objections of Vincent," which may possibly be the work of the same St. Vincent of Lerins. This is a collection of "logical deductions" from statements of Blessed Augustine which, to be sure, every right-believing Christian would have to oppose: "God is the author of our sins," "repentance is useless for one predestined to death," "God has created the greater part of the human race for eternal damnation," etc.

If the criticisms of these two books were directed against Augustine himself (whom St. Vincent does not mention by name in the *Commonitory*), they are manifestly unfair. Augustine never taught *such* a doctrine of predestination, which simply destroys the whole meaning of ascetic struggle; he himself, as we have seen, found it necessary to come out against those who "are extolling grace to such an extent that they deny the freedom of the human will" (Letter 214), and he would certainly have been on St. Vincent's side against those whom the latter criticized. St. Vincent's criticisms are indeed valid, however, when they are directed (and rightly so) against the immoderate followers of Augustine — those who distorted his teaching in an un-Orthodox direction and, neglecting all of Augustine's explanations, taught that God's grace is effective without human effort.

Unfortunately, however, there is one point of Augustine's teaching on grace, and in particular of predestination, where he fell into a serious error which has given fuel to the "logical deductions" which heretics have made from his doctrine. In Augustine's view of grace and freedom, the Apostle's statement that God *wills all men to be saved* (I Tim. 2:4) cannot be *literally* true; if God "predestines" only some to be saved, then He must *will* only some to be saved. Here again, human logic fails to understand the mystery of Christian truth. But Augustine, faithful to his logic, must "explain" the passage of Scripture in a way consistent with his whole teaching on grace; and thus he says: *"He wills all men to be saved* is so said that all the predestined may be understood by it, because every kind of man is among them" ("On Rebuke and Grace," ch. 44). Thus, he does actually deny that God wills all men to be saved. Worse, he is carried so far by the logical consistency of his thought that he even teaches (although only in a few places) a "negative" predestination — a predestination to eternal damnation, something totally foreign to the Scriptures. He speaks clearly of a "class of men which is predestinated to destruction" ("On Man's Perfection in Righteousness," ch. 13), and again says: "To those whom He has predestinated to

eternal death, He is also the most righteous awarder of punishment" ("On the Soul and its Origin," ch. 16).

But here again we must be careful not to read into Augustine's words the later interpretations of them which Calvin made. Augustine in this doctrine does not at all maintain that God determines or wills any man *to do evil;* the whole context of his thought makes it clear that he believed no such thing, and he often denied this specific accusation, sometimes with evident exasperation. Thus, when it was objected to him that "it is by his own fault that anyone deserts the faith, when he yields and consents to the temptation which is the cause of his desertion of the faith" (as against the teaching that God *determines* a man to desert the faith), Augustine found it necessary to make no reply except: *"Who denies it?"* ("On the Gift of Perseverance," ch. 46). Some decades later the disciple of Blessed Augustine, Fulgentius of Ruspe, in interpreting this teaching, states: "In no other sense do I suppose that passage of St. Augustine should be taken, in which he affirms that there are certain persons predestinated to destruction, than in regard to their *punishment,* not their sin: not to the evil which they unrighteously commit, but to the punishment which they shall righteously suffer" (*Ad Monimum,* I, 1). Augustine's doctrine of "predestination to eternal death," therefore, does not state that God wills or determines any man to desert the faith or to do evil, nor to be condemned to hell by God's arbitrary will, quite apart from a man's free choice of good or evil; rather, it states that God wills the condemnation of those who, of their own free will, do evil. This, however, is not the Orthodox teaching, and Augustine's doctrine of predestination, even with all its qualifications, is still all too liable to mislead people.

Augustine's teaching was expressed well before St. Cassian wrote his *Conferences,* and it is obvious whom the latter had in mind when, in his thirteenth Conference, he gave the clear Orthodox answer to this error: "For if He willeth not that one of His little ones should perish, how can we imagine without grievous blasphemy that He does not generally will *all* men, but only *some* instead of *all* to be saved? Those then who perish, perish against His will" (*Conferences,* XIII, 7). Augustine would not be able to accept such a doctrine, because he has falsely *absolutized* grace and can conceive of nothing that can happen against the will of God, but in the Orthodox doctrine of synergy, a truer place is given to the mystery of human freedom, which can indeed choose not to accept what God has willed for it and constantly calls it to.

The doctrine of predestination (not in Augustine's restricted sense, but in the fatalistic sense it was given by later heretics) had a lamentable future in the West. There were at least three major outbreaks of it: in the mid-5th cen-

tury, the presbyter Lucidus taught an absolute predestination both to salvation and damnation, God's power irresistibly impelling some to good and others to evil — although he repented of this doctrine after being combatted by St. Faustus, Bishop of Rhegium, a worthy disciple of Lerins and of St. Cassian, and being condemned by the provincial Council of Arles in about the year 475; in the 9th century, the Saxon monk Gottschalk started the controversy anew, affirming two "absolutely similar" predestinations (one to salvation and one to damnation), denying human freedom as well as God's will to save all men, and thus arousing a violent controversy in the Frankish empire; and, in modern times, Luther, Zwingli, and especially Calvin taught the most extreme form of predestination: that God has created some men as "vessels of wrath" for sin and eternal damnation, and that salvation and damnation are granted by God solely at his pleasure without regard to men's actions. Although Augustine himself never taught anything like these gloomy and most un-Christian doctrines, still the ultimate source of them is clear, and even the Catholic Encyclopedia (1911 edition, which was careful to defend the orthodoxy of Augustine) admits it: "The origin of heretical predestinarianism must be traced back to the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of St. Augustine's views relating to eternal election and reprobation. But it was only after his death that this heresy sprang up in the Church of the West, whilst that of the East was preserved in a remarkable manner from these extravagances" (vol. XII, p. 376). Nothing can be clearer than that the East was preserved from these heresies precisely by the doctrine of St. Cassian and the Eastern Fathers who correctly taught on grace and freedom and left no room for "misinterpretations" of the doctrine.

The exaggerations of Blessed Augustine in his teaching on grace were, therefore, quite serious and had lamentable consequences. Let us not, however, exaggerate ourselves and find him guilty of the extreme views which obvious heretics, as well as his enemies, have ascribed to him. Nor must we place on him all the blame for the arising of these heresies; such a view overlooks the actual nature of the course of intellectual history. Even the greatest thinker does not exert influence in an intellectual vacuum; the reason why extreme predestinarianism broke out at different times in the West (and not in the East) was due first of all, not to Augustine's teaching (which was only a pretext and a seeming justification), but rather to the overly-logical mentality which has always been present in the peoples of the West: in Augustine's case it produced exaggerations in a basically Orthodox thinker, while in the case of Calvin (for example) it produced an abominable heresy in someone who was far indeed from orthodoxy in thought or feeling. If Augustine had taught his doctrine in the East and in Greek, there would have been no heresy of predestinarianism there,

or at least none with the widespread consequences of the Western heresies; the non-rationalistic character of the Eastern mind would not have drawn any consequences from Augustine's exaggerations, and in general would have paid less attention to him than the West did, seeing in him what the Orthodox Church today continues to see in him: a venerable Father of the Church, not without his errors, who ranks rather behind the greatest Fathers of East and West.

But to see this more clearly, now that we have examined in some detail the nature of his most controversial teaching, let us turn to the opinions of the Holy Fathers of East and West with regard to Blessed Augustine.

OPINIONS IN FIFTH-CENTURY GAUL

THE OPINION of the Fathers of 5th-century Gaul must be the starting place for this enquiry, for it is there that his teaching on grace was first and most sharply challenged. We have seen the sharpness of the criticism of Augustine's teaching (or that of his followers) by St. Cassian and St. Vincent; how, then, did they and others at this time regard Augustine himself? In answering this question we shall have to touch a little more on the doctrine of grace itself, and also see how the disciples of Augustine themselves were compelled to modify his teaching in answer to the criticisms of St. Cassian and his followers.

Historians of the controversy over grace in 5th century Gaul have not failed to notice how mild it was in comparison with the disputes against Nestorius, Pelagius, and other obvious heretics; it was always seen as a controversy *within the Church,* not as a dispute of the Church with heretics. Never does anyone call Augustine a heretic, nor does Augustine apply this name to those who criticized him. The treatises written "Against Augustine" are solely the work of heretics (such as the Pelagian teacher Julian), not Orthodox Fathers.

Prosper of Aquitaine and Hilary, in their letters to Augustine informing him of the views of St. Cassian and others (published as Letters 225 and 226 in the works of Augustine), note that although they criticize his teaching on grace and predestination, in other matters they agree with him entirely and are great admirers of his. Augustine in his turn, in publishing his two treatises answering these criticisms, refers to his critics as "those brethren of ours on whose behalf your pious love is solicitous," whose views on grace "abundantly distinguish them from the error of the Pelagians" ("On the Predestination of the Saints," ch. 2). And in the conclusion of his final treatise he offers his opinions humbly to the judgment of the Church: "Let those who think that I am in error consider again and again carefully what is here said, lest per-

chance they themselves may be mistaken. And when, by means of those who read my writings, I become not only wiser, but even more perfect, I acknowledge God's favor to me" ("On the Gift of Perseverance," ch. 68). Blessed Augustine was certainly never a "fanatic" in his expression of doctrinal disagreements with his fellow Orthodox Christians; and his gracious and generous tone was generally shared by his opponents on the question of grace.

St. Cassian himself, in his book *Against Nestorius*, uses Augustine as one of his eight chief Patristic authorities on the doctrine of Christ's Incarnation, quoting from two of his works (VII, 27). It is true that he refers to Augustine not with words of great praise such as he reserves for Sts. Hilary of Poitiers ("a man endowed with all virtues and graces," ch. 24), Ambrose ("that illustrious priest of God, who never leaving the Lord's hand, ever shone like a jewel upon the finger of God," ch. 25), or Jerome ("the teacher of the Catholics, whose writings shine like divine lamps throughout the whole world," ch. 26). He calls him merely "Augustine the priest (sacerdos) of Hippo Regiensis," and there can be little doubt that he does this because he regards Augustine as a Father of less authority than they. Something similar may be seen in the later Eastern Fathers who distinguish between the "divine" Ambrose and the "blessed" Augustine, and this is indeed why Augustine is usually called "blessed" in the East to this day (a name that will be explained below). But the fact remains that St. Cassian did regard Augustine as an authority on a question where his views on grace were not involved — that is, as an Orthodox Father and neither a heretic nor a person whose teaching is dubious or can be disregarded. Similarly, there is an anthology of Augustine's teaching on the Trinity and the Incarnation which has come down to us under the name of St. Vincent of Lerins — another indication that Augusine was accepted as an Orthodox teacher on other questions even by those who opposed his teaching on grace.

Shortly after the death of Blessed Augustine (early 430's), Prosper of Aquitaine made a journey to Rome and appealed for an authoritative opinion from Pope Celestine against those who were criticizing Augustine. The Pope gave no judgment on the dogmatic issues involved, but he did send a letter to the bishops of southern Gaul with what seems to be the prevailing as well as the "official" view of Augustine in the West at that time: "With Augustine, whom all men everywhere loved and honored, we ever held communion. Let a stop be put to this spirit of disparagement, which unhappily is on the increase."

Augustine's teaching on grace did indeed continue to cause disturbance in the Church of Gaul throughout the 5th century. However, the wisest minds on both sides of the controversy spoke moderately. Thus, even Prosper of Aquitaine, the leading disciple of Augustine in the first years after the lat-

ter's death, admits in one of his works in defense of him ("Answers to the *Capitula Gallorum,*" VIII) that Augustine spoke too harshly (*durius*) when he said that God did not will that all men should be saved. And his later work (about 450), "The Call of All Nations" (*De vocatione omnium gentium*), reveals that his own teaching mellowed considerably before his death. (Some have doubted the traditional ascription of this book to Prosper, but recent scholarship has confirmed his authorship — see the translation of Prosper by de Letter). This book sets as its aim "to investigate what restraint and moderation we ought to maintain in our views on this conflict of opinions" Book I, 1), and the author really does try to express the truth of grace and salvation in such a way as to satisfy both sides and put an end to the dispute, if possible. In particular, he emphasizes that grace does not *compel* man, but acts in harmony with man's free will. Expressing the essence of his teaching, he writes: "If we give up completely all wrangling that springs up in the heat of immoderate disputes, it will be clear that we must hold for certain three points in this question. First, we must confess that God wills all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of truth. Secondly, there can be no doubt that all who actually come to the knowledge of the truth and to salvation, do so not in virtue of their own merits but of the efficacious help of divine grace. Thirdly, we must admit that human understanding is unable to fathom the depths of God's judgments" (Book II, 1). This is essentially the "reformed" (and considerably improved) version of Augustine's doctrine which finally prevailed at the Council of Orange 75 years later and brought an end to the controversy.*

The chief of the Fathers of Gaul after St. Cassian to uphold the Orthodox doctrine of synergy was St. Faustus of Lerins, later bishop of Rhegium (Riez). He wrote a treatise "On the Grace of God and Free Will" in which he attacked both the pernicious teacher Pelagius" on the one hand, and the "error of predestinarianism" (having in mind the presbyter Lucidus) on the other. Like St. Cassian, he saw grace and freedom as parallel, grace always cooperating with the human will for man's salvation. He compared free will to "a certain small hook" that reaches out and seizes grace — an image not likely to pacify strict Augustinians who insisted on an absolute "prevenient grace." When writing about the books of Augustine in a letter to the deacon Graecus, he notes that even "in the most learned men there are things that may be considered to be suspect"; but he is always respectful to the person of Augustine and calls him *beatissimus pontifex Augustinus,* "the most blessed hierarch Augustine." St. Faustus also kept the feast day of Blessed Augustine's repose, and his writings include a homily for this feast.

* See Prosper of Aquitaine, *The Call of All Nations,* translated by P. de Letter, S.J., The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, 1952.

But even the mild expressions of this great Father were found objectionable by strict Augustinians such as the African Fulgentius of Ruspe, who wrote treatises on grace and predestination against St. Faustus, and the long-smouldering controversy continued. We may see the Orthodox view of this controversy at the end of the 5th century in the collection of biographical notes of the presbyter Gennadius of Marseilles, *Lives of Illustrious Men* (a continuation of Blessed Jerome's book of the same name). Gennadius, in his treatise *On Ecclesiastical Dogmas,* shows himself to be a disciple of St. Cassian in the question of grace and free will, and his comments on the leading participants in the controversy give us a good idea of how the defenders of St. Cassian in the West regard the question some fifty or more years after the death of both Augustine and Cassian.

About St. Cassian, Gennadius says (ch. 62): "He wrote from experience, and in forcible language, or to speak more clearly, with meaning back of his words and action back of his speech. He covered the whole field of practical directions, for monks of all sorts." There follows a list of his works, with all the Conferences mentioned by name, which makes this one of the longest chapters in the book. Nothing is said specifically of his teaching on grace, but St. Cassian is clearly presented as an Orthodox Father.

About Prosper, on the other hand, Gennadius writes (ch. 85): "I regard as his an anonymous book against certain works of Cassian which the Church of God finds salutary, but which he brands as injurious; and in fact, some of the opinions of Cassian and Prosper on the Grace of God and on free will are at variance with one another." Here the Orthodoxy of Cassian's teaching on grace is specifically declared, and Prosper's teaching is found to be at variance with it; his criticism of Prosper, nevertheless, is mild.

About St. Faustus, Gennadius writes (ch. 86): "He published an excellent work, 'On the Grace of God through Which We Are Saved,' in which he teaches that the grace of God always invites, precedes and helps our will, and whatever gain freedom of will may attain for its pious effect is not its own desert, but the gift of grace." And later, after comments on his other books: "This excellent teacher is enthusiastically believed in and admired." Clearly, Gennadius defends St. Faustus as an Orthodox Father, and in particular defends him against the charge (often made against St. Cassian as well) that he denies "prevenient grace." The followers of Augustine could not understand that the Orthodox doctrine of synergy does not at all deny "prevenient grace," but only teaches its *cooperation* with free will. Gennadius (and St. Faustus himself) made a special point of stating this belief in "prevenient grace."

Now let us see what Gennadius has to say about Augustine himself. It should be remembered that this book was written in the 480's or 490's, when the controversy over Augustine's teaching on grace was some sixty years old, when his exaggerations of the doctrine had been exposed and abundantly discussed, and when the painful consequences of these exaggerations were evident in the already-condemned predestinarianism of Lucidus.

"Augustine of Hippo, bishop of Hippo Regiensis, a man renowned throughout the world for learning both sacred and secular, unblemished in the faith, pure in life, wrote works so many that they cannot all be gathered. For who is there that can boast himself of having all his works, or who reads with such diligence as to read all he has written?" To his praise of Augustine some manuscripts add at this point a criticism: "Wherefore, on account of his much speaking Solomon's saying came true that *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin*" (ch. 39). This criticism of Augustine (whether it belongs to Gennadius himself or to a later copyist) is no less mild than that of Sts. Cassian and Faustus, merely pointing out that the teaching of Augustine was not perfect. Clearly, the spokesmen of the fully Orthodox teaching on grace in 5th-century Gaul did not regard Augustine as anything but a great teacher and Father, even though they found it necessray to point out his errors. This has continued to be the Orthodox attitude towards Augustine right up to our own day.

By the beginning of the 6th century the controversy over grace had become concentrated in a criticism of the teaching of St. Faustus, whose "little hook" of free will continued to trouble the still overly-logical followers of Augustine. The whole controversy finally came to an end largely through the efforts of one man whose position especially favored a final reconciliation of the two parties. St. Caesarius, Metropolitan of Arles, was an offspring of the monastery of Lerins, where he was the strictest of ascetics, and a follower of the monastic teaching of St. Faustus, whom he never ceased to call a saint; but at the same time he greatly admired and dearly loved Blessed Augustine, and in the end he was to obtain the request he made of God that he might die on the day of Augustine's repose (he died on the eve, August 27, 543). Under his presidency, the Council of Orange was called in 529, with 14 bishops present, and approved 25 canons which gave a somewhat modified version of the teaching of Blessed Augustine on grace. Augustine's exaggerated expressions on the almost irresistable nature of grace were carefully avoided, and nothing whatever was said of his teaching on predestination. Significantly, the doctrine of "predestination to evil" (which some had derived as a mistaken "logical deduction" from Augustine's "predestination to death") was specifically condemned and its

followers ("if there are any who wish to believe so evil a thing") anathematized.*

The Orthodox doctrine of St. Cassian and St. Faustus was not quoted at this Council, but neither was it condemned; their teaching of synergy was simply not understood. The freedom of the human will, of course, was maintained, but within the framework of the overly-logical Western view of grace and nature. The teaching of Augustine was corrected, but the fullness of the profounder Eastern teaching was not recognized. That is why the teaching of St. Cassian comes today as such a revelation to Western seekers of Christian truth — not that the teaching of Augustine, in its modified form, is "wrong" (for it teaches the truth as well as it can within its limited framework), but that the teaching of St. Cassian is a deeper and fuller expression of the truth.

SIXTH-CENTURY OPINION, EAST AND WEST

ONCE THE CONTROVERSY over grace had ceased to trouble the West (the East paid little attention to it, its own teaching being secure and not under attack there), the reputation of Augustine remained fixed: he was a great Father of the Church, well known and respected throughout the West, less known but still respected in the East.

The opinion of him in the West may be seen in the references to him by *St. Gregory the Dialogist,* Pope of Rome, an Orthodox Father recognized in East as well as West. In a letter to Innocent, Prefect of Africa, St. Gregory writes (having in mind, in particular, Augustine's commentaries of Scripture): "If you desire to be satiated with delicious food, read the works of the blessed Augustine, your countryman, and seek not our chaff in comparison with his fine wheat" (Epistles, Book X, 37). Elsewhere St. Gregory calls him "Saint Augustine" (*Epistles,* Book II, 54).

In the East, where there was little reason to discuss Augustine (whose writings were still little known), the opinion of Blessed Augustine can be most clearly seen on the great occasion in this century when the Fathers of East and West came together — at the Fifth Ecumenical Council, which met at Constantinople in 553. In the Acts of this Council the name of Augustine is mentioned several times. Thus, during the First Session of the Council, the letter of Emperor St. Justinian was read to the assembled fathers, containing the following passage: "We further declare that we hold fast to the decrees of the Four Councils, and in every way follow the holy Fathers, Athanasius, Basil, Gregory the Theologian, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, Theophilus, John (Chrysostom)

* J. C. Ayer, *A Source Book for Ancient Church History,* New York, 1922, p. 475.

of Constantinople, Cyril, Augustine, Proclus, Leo and their writings on the true faith" (*The Seven Ecumenical Councils,* Eerdmans ed., p. 303).

Again, in the final "Sentence" of the Council, when the fathers invoke the authority of Blessed Augustine on a certain point, he is referred to in this way: "Several letters of Augustine, of most religious memory, who shone forth resplendent among the African bishops, were read. . ." (Ibid., p. 309).

Finally, the Pope of Rome, Vigilius, who had been in Constantinople but had refused to take part in the Council, in the "Decretal Letter" which he issued some months later (while he was still in Constantinople) at last accepting the Council, took as the example for his own retraction Blessed Augustine, whom he spoke about in these terms: "It is manifest that our Fathers, and especially the blessed Augustine, who was in very truth illustrious in the Divine Scriptures, and a master in Roman eloquence, retracted some of his own writings, and corrected some of his own sayings, and added what he had omitted and afterward found out" (Ibid., p. 322).

It is evident, then, that in the 6th century Blessed Augustine was a recognized Father of the Church who is spoken about in terms of great praise — praise that is not lessened by recognition of the fact that he sometimes taught imprecisely and had to correct himself.

In later centuries the passage in the letter of Emperor St. Justinian, where he numbers Augustine among the leading Fathers of the Church, was quoted by Latin writers in theological disputes with the East (the text of the Acts of this Council having been preserved only in Latin), with the intention precisely of establishing the authority of Augustine and other Western Fathers in the Universal Church. We shall see how leading Eastern Fathers of these centuries accepted Blessed Augustine as an Orthodox Father, and at the same time handed down to us the correct Orthodox attitude towards Fathers like Augustine who have fallen into various errors.

(To be continued.)

Saint Mark of Ephesus

(Continued from page 66)

interpreting the passage of Scripture, *the voice of the Lord Who divideth the flame of fire* (Ps. 28:7): "The fire prepared for the torment of the devil and his angels, is divided by the voice of the Lord, so that after this there might be two powers in it: one that burns, and another that illumines; the tormenting and punishing power of that fire is reserved for those worthy of torment; while the illumining and enlightening power is intended for the shining of those who rejoice. Therefore the voice of the Lord Who divides and separates the flame of fire is for this: that the dark part might be a fire of torment and the unburning part a light of enjoyment" (St. Basil, Homily on Psalm 28).

And so, as may be seen, this division and separation of that fire will be when absolutely everyone will pass through it: the bright and shining works will be manifest as yet brighter, and those who bring them will become inheritors of the light and will receive that eternal reward; while those who bring bad works suitable for burning, being punished by the loss of them, will eternally remain in fire and will inherit a salvation which is worse than perdition, for this is what, strictly speaking, the word "saved" means — that the destroying power of fire will not be applied to them and they themselves be utterly destroyed. Following these Fathers, many other of our Teachers also have understood this passage in the same sense. And if anyone has interpreted it differently and understood "salvation" as "deliverance from punishment," and "going through fire" as "purgatory" — such a one, if we may so express ourselves, understands this passage in an entirely wrong way. And

this is not surprising, for he is a man, and many even among the Teachers may be seen to interpret passages of Scripture in various ways, and not all of them have attained in an equal degree the precise meaning. It is not possible that one and the same text, being handed down in various interpretations, should correspond in an equal degree to all the interpretations of it; but we, selecting the most important of them and those that best correspond to church dogmas, should place the other interpretations in second place. Therefore, we shall not deviate from the above-cited interpretation of the Apostle's words, even if Augustine or Gregory the Dialogist or another of your Teachers should give such an interpretation; for such an interpretation answers less to the idea of a temporary purgatorial fire than to the teaching of Origen which, speaking of a final restoration of souls through that fire and a deliverance from torment, was forbidden and given over to anathema by the Fifth Ecumenical Council, and was definitively overthrown as a common impiety for the Church.

(In chapters 7 through 12, St. Mark answers objections raised by quotations from the works of Blessed Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Gregory the Dialogist, St. Basil the Great, and other Fathers, showing that they have been misinterpreted or perhaps misquoted and that these Fathers actually teach the Orthodox doctrine, and if not, then their teaching is not to be accepted. Further, he points out that St. Gregory of Nyssa does not teach about "purgatory" at all, but holds the much worse error of Origen, that there will be an end to the eternal flames of hell — although it may be that these ideas were placed in his writings later by Origenists.)

13. And finally you say: "The above-mentioned truth is evident from the Divine Justice, which does not leave unpunished anything that was done amiss, and from this it necessarily follows that for those who have not undergone punishment here, and cannot pay it off either in heaven or in hell, it remains to suppose the existence of a different, a third place in which this cleansing is accomplished, thanks to which each one, becoming cleansed, is immediately led up to heavenly enjoyment."

(Chapter 3 demonstrates that the Church prays also for those already enjoying blessedness with God — who, of course, have no need to go through "purgatorial fire.")

4. After this, a little further on, you desired to prove the above-mentioned dogma of purgatorial fire, at first quoting what is said in the book of Maccabees: *It is holy and pious . . . to pray for the dead . . . that they might be delivered from their sin* (II Maccabees 12:44-45). Then, taking from the Gospel according to Matthew the place in which the Saviour declares that *whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this world, nor in that which is to come* (Matt. 12:32), you say that from this one may see that there is a remission of sins in the future life.

But that from this there in no way follows the idea of purgatorial fire is clearer than the sun; for what is there in common between remission on the one hand, and cleansing by fire and punishment on the other? For if the remission of sins is accomplished for the sake of prayers, or merely by the Divine love of mankind itself, there is no need for punishment and cleansing (by fire). But if punishment, and also cleansing, are established (by God) . . . then, it would seem, prayers (for the reposed) are performed in vain, and vainly do we hymn the Divine love of mankind. And so, these citations are less a proof of the existence of purgatorial fire than a refutation of it: for the remission of sins of those who have transgressed is presented in them as the result of a certain royal authority and love of mankind, and not as a deliverance from punishment or a cleansing.

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to comfort the soul of this man who brought the words of Christ to his mind, he went to St. Peter's Church and wept floods of tears, as was his custom, until he gained at last by divine revelation the assurance that his prayers were answered, seeing that he had never presumed to ask this for any other pagan." (*The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great,* by an Anonymous Monk of Whitby, tr. by Bertram Colgrave, The University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, Kansas, 1968, ch. 29, pp. 127-9.) Since the Church does not offer public prayer for departed non-believers, it is evident that this deliverance from hell was the fruit of St. Gregory's own personal prayer. Although this is a rare occurrence, it gives hope to those who have dear ones who have died outside the faith.

FROM THE SECOND HOMILY ON PURGATORIAL FIRE*

3. We affirm that neither the righteous have as yet received the fullness of their lot and that blessed condition for which they have prepared themselves here through works, nor have sinners, after death, been led away into the eternal punishment in which they shall be tormented eternally. Rather, both the one and the other must necessarily take place after the Judgment of that last day and the resurrection of all. Now, however, both the one and the other are in places proper to them: the first, in absolue repose and free, are in heaven with the angels and before God Himself, and already as if in the paradise from which Adam fell (into which the good thief entered before others) and often visit us in those temples where they are venerated, and hear those who call on them and pray for them to God, having received from Him this surpassing gift, and through their relics perform miracles, and take delight in the vision of God and the illumination sent from Him more perfectly and purely than before, when they were alive; while the second, in their turn, being confined in hell, remain *in the lowest pit, in darkness and in the shadow of death* (Ps. 87:7), as David says, and then Job: *to the land where light is as darkness* (Job 10:21-22). And the first remain in every joy and rejoicing, already expecting and only not having in their hands the Kingdom and the unutterable good things promised them; and the second, on the contrary, remain in all confinement and inconsolable suffering, like condemned men awaiting the Judge's sentence and foreseeing those torments. Neither have the first yet received the inheritance of the Kingdom and those good things *which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man* (I Cor. 2:9); nor have the second yet been given over to eternal torments nor to burning in the unquenchable fire. And this teaching we have as handed down from our Fathers in antiquity, and we can easily present it from the Divine Scriptures themselves.

* Russian text in Pogodin, pp. 118-150.

10. That which certain of the saints have seen in vision and revelation regarding the future torment of the impious and sinners who are in it are certain images of future things and as it were depictions, and not what is already in fact happening now. Thus, for example, Daniel, describing that future Judgment, says: *As I looked, thrones were placed and one that was ancient of days took his seat . . . and the books were opened (Daniel* 7:9-10), whereas it is clear that this in very fact has not taken place, but was revealed in the spirit beforehand to the Prophet.

19. When we examine the testimonies which you have cited from the book of Maccabees and the Gospel, speaking simply with love for the truth, we see that they do not at all contain any testimony of some kind of punishment or cleansing, but speak only of the remission of sins. You have made a certain astonishing division, saying that every sin must be understood under two aspects: (1) the offense itself which is made to God, and (2) the punishment which follows it. Of these two aspects (you teach), the offense to God, indeed, can be remitted after repentance and turning away from evil, but the liability to punishment must exist in every case; so that, on the basis of this idea, it is essential that those released from sins should all the same be subject to punishment for them.

But we allow ourselves to say that such a stating of the question contradicts clear and commonly-known truths: if we do not see that a king, after he has granted an amnesty and pardon, subjects the guilty to yet more punishment, then all the more God, among Whose many characteristics love of mankind is an especially outstanding one, even though He does punish a man after a sin which he has committed, still, after He has forgiven him He immediately delivers him from punishment also. And this is natural. For if the offense to God leads to punishment, then when the guilt is forgiven and reconciliation has occurred, the very consequence of the guilt — the punishment — of necessity comes to an end.

The Paschal Epistle, 1978

OF HIS EMINENCE ANTHONY, ARCHBISHOP OF WESTERN AMERICA AND SAN FRANCISCO

Christ is risen!

"Of Thy Resurrection, O Christ Saviour, the Angels sing in heaven. . ." (Sticheron sung at the beginning of the Paschal Matins).

I DESIRE FOR YOU, dear fellow-pastors, brothers, sisters, and children, that of which the Church sings on the night of Pascha: "Vouchsafe also to us who are on earth with pure hearts to glorify Thee." And since there is no pure heart without hearfelt warmth, we desire for ourselves and for everyone not only to forgive one's neighbors, but to strive to receive their forgiveness, so that upon all of us there might be fulfilled the mystery of Pascha whose power is hymned in the words: "Let us forgive all in the Resurrection!" (Sticheron of Pascha.)

One heartfelt "forgive!" has been engraved in my memory. I heard it about thirty years ago. This was in New York in the Serbian church. Bishop Nicholas of Zicha, the "Serbian Chrysostom," was in the Altar before the communion of the Holy Mysteries. Turning to the closed Royal Doors, he quietly and with concentration said, as we all did, "Forgive me . . ." and added: "Forgive me, Serbian people."

So also I would like, for Pascha, the Lord's Pascha, as before communion of the Holy Mysteries, to cry out mentally: "Christ is risen! Forgive me for everything, good Russian people!"

I think at the same time of those rare clergymen in our Homeland, ones like Fr. Dimitry Dudko, ones like Fr. Gleb Yakunin who stands in the midst of a multitude of shocking complaints and cries out in defense of minimal human rights for all believers; I think of those who are in prison or await imprison-

ment, of all who have the support neither of bishops nor, of course, of a patriarch. . .

Forgive me, zealous Russian pastors, that I have not made use of my freedom here, whereas you have made maximum use of your bitter lack of freedom in the bitterest years of the conspiracy under the oppressors of the Church.

I think also, as I write these lines, of how here, outside of Russia, we cannot, of course, sacrifice our Church convictions; but we know that towards a person of different (not our own) convictions it is better and more correct to try to find an approach that is not sharply polemical, but as much as possible heartfelt and convincing. But has it always been this way? No — for we are human.

Therefore let there be carried along from heart to heart throughout our whole Diaspora, as a breath of the "Pascha of purification" (Canon of Pascha, Canticle 4), of the Pascha that cleanses the conscience, the words: "Christ is risen, you who are ours in faith! Forgive everything that has not been as it should be! In truth He is risen!"

Precisely for the 990th time the Russian Church now greets the Bright Feast. There burn for our people the unquenchable prayers of the Russian Saints, glorified or yet awaiting glorification, whose ranks always increase. During the First World War there were inscribed in the list of saints the names of the Holy Hierarchs Pitirim of Tambov and John of Tobolsk; in the days of ruin that followed there were joined to them the Holy Hierarchs Sophronius of Irkutsk and Joseph of Astrakhan . . .

But behold, new intercessors for our people have also drawn to themselves the love and prayerful hope of the faithful: the Righteous John of Kronstadt, St. Herman of Alaska, the Holy Hierarchs Nicholas the Apostle of Japan, and Innocent of Moscow, who left the North American aborigines and all of us his "Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven." And the "living sacrifices" — the new martyrs of Russia, and the one who went her own special way, Blessed Xenia of Petersburg . . .

Some of these righteous ones are already inscribed, others are not yet inscribed in the various calendars of saints; but all of them in truth are our treasure and, of course, all greet the great and sacred Pascha in wondrous unity with the Angels of God.

By their prayers, O Christ Saviour, "Vouchsafe also to us who are on earth (with one mouth and one heart) with pure hearts to glorify Thee."

Forgive me, everyone. In truth Christ is risen!

Two Recent of Archbishop

A PARALYZED MAN GETS UP

Dear Fathers,

Having read the "Chronicle of the Veneration of Archbishop John of Shanghai," I cannot be silent. My father, Herbert Klingart, on November 2, 1977, suffered a bad stroke and was paralyzed without consciousness for five days. In December there was a consultation of twelve physicians. They stated and signed that he would not be able to speak or to walk, and said, "Be prepared for the worst."

I flew to San Francisco and prayed at the tomb of Archbishop John. Thanks to Boris Troyan I received a prosphora, and his wife gave me a chocolate Christmas tree ornament from the Sepulchre, and they placed a little piece of paper with my father's name on it under the mitre of Archbishop John*. Soon he was able to get up and every day became better. At Christmas he was brought home from the hospital for a visit, and in January he was already playing chess and could understand and speak. I took photos of him and showed them to the physicians. They said that they did not understand this and could not explain it, that this must be a miracle . . . Now he already walks by himself.

What a good fortune that Vladika John is with us, and through him our prayers reach up to the Lord God.

Nonna Katzenstein
2551 W. Campbell Ave.
La Habra, Ca. 90631
March 28, 1978

* A tradition from old Russia, done when people entreat the prayers of a holy hierarch at his tomb.

Miracles
John Maximovitch

A SKIN GROWTH DISAPPEARS

CHRIST IS RISEN! Indeed He is risen!

Dear Fathers,

With prayers of thanksgiving to the Risen Christ, He Who works miracles through His Saints, I write to you this account:

For several years I have had a skin growth on the side of my neck. It started out as a pinpoint bump and had increased in size and length until it was about 1/8 inch in diameter and 3/8 inch long. A year and a half ago I was forced to remove my cross and neck chain because the chain would cut into this growth, make it bleed and cause me much pain. I put my cross and chain away in a dresser drawer. It bothered me not to have Christ's cross around my neck and at times I thought about having the growth surgically removed. But I was confronting other trials and tribulations and this just seemed a part of it all. Instead, through prayer and fasting, I tried to better my inner self rather than my external shell.

While ordering icon prints from a bookstore in California I also saw something about "free" oil from the Sepulchre of Archbishop John Maximovitch. So out of curiosity I ordered some of this oil. At that time I had no idea who this man was or what he did or anything at all about him. My order was delayed for some time (this being the will of God). However, during this time I started to hear things about this Archbishop John — his pious life, his works, his deeds, his healings and about this oil and how it should be used. A genuine feeling of respect began to grow in my heart for this man.

I received the oil a week or two before this year's Great Fast began. I gave half of it to a very pious friend who in turn shared it with others. I anointed my forehead and those of my family and put what was left on my icon shelf.

By this time with all my love I was asking for the Archbishop's prayers and was also praying for his blessed repose. In prayer I told the Archbishop that beginning with the first day of Lent I would anoint my neck growth with his oil, and I asked that he beseech the Lord to remove it from me. So for the few days that remained before Lent I prayed:

Please remember me, Archbishop John, *you know* how much I want to wear my cross again. Pray for me, God-pleaser. Blessed wonderworker, take away this growth that keeps me from wearing the Life-giving Cross of our Saviour.

On Monday night, March 13, 1978, after I had said my evening prayers in my icon corner, I took the oil from the shelf, put some on my finger and for the first time I anointed my neck in the area of the growth. I didn't feel it! How strange, I instantly thought, that I should miss the spot. But how could I miss it? It's been with me for so long. I stepped away from the corner to a wall mirror to check but the vigil light was insufficient to see by. My heart was beating fast. I rushed to the bathroom, put on the light and checked my neck. *The growth was gone!* There was no blood, no scab, no pain. With tears I went back to my icon corner and thanked Archbishop John Maximovitch.

Soon after I had a Panikhida said for Blessed John's repose. For this service I put my cross back on for the first time in well over a year. Now each time I touch this cross I thank Blessed John and I will pray for him always.

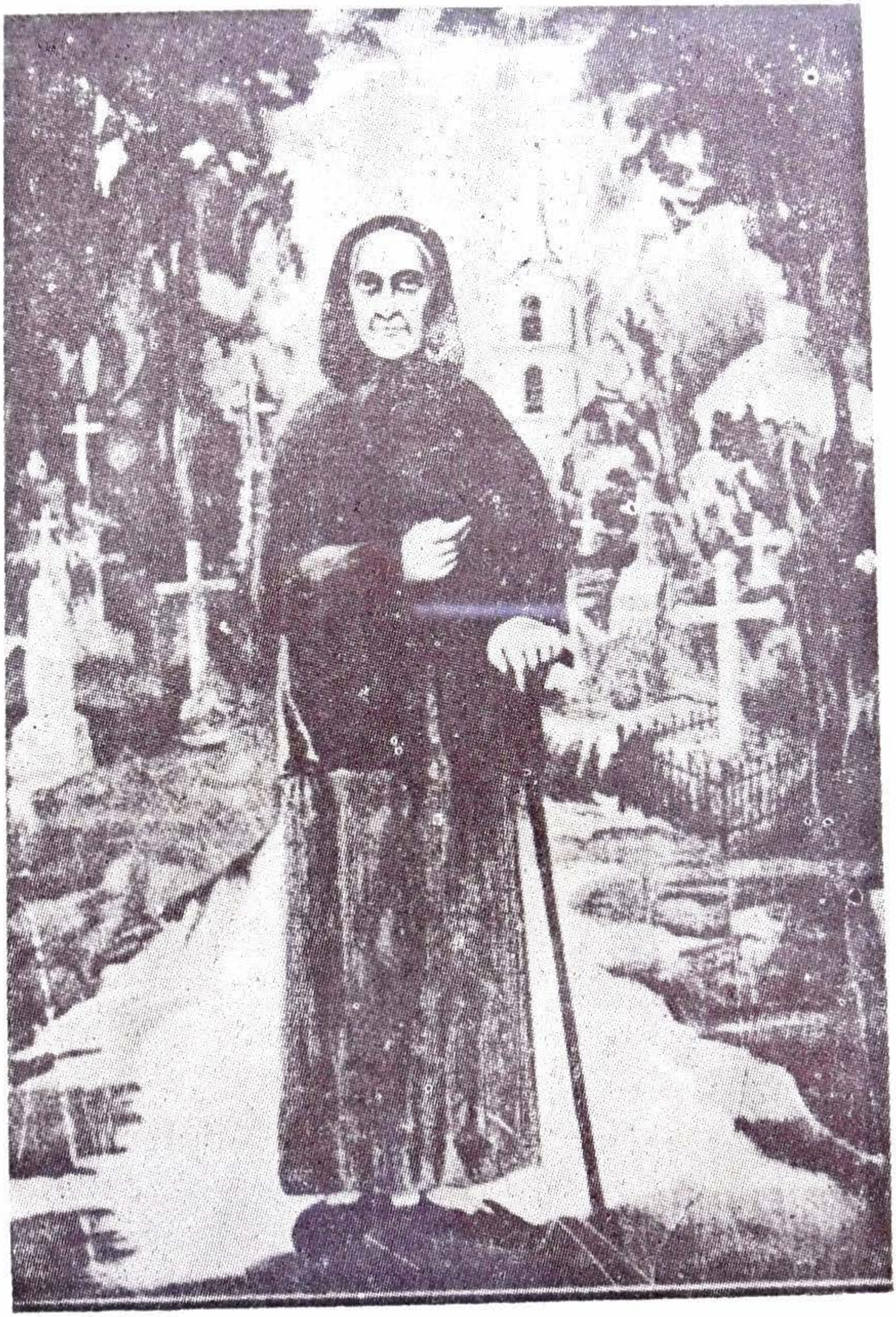
For your information I am 33 years old, married and the father of two children.

As God is my witness what I have written here is the truth-

Peter A. Terasowich
831 Milford Pt. Road
Milford, Conn. 06460

ARCHBISHOP JOHN

Officiating not long before his repose



BLESSED XENIA

in the Smolensk Cemetery
(19th-century painting)

LETTERS

(*Continued*)

souls eternally. Shortly afterward, I received a letter from the company's customer-relations man. He thanked me for my letter and stated that they did not "intend to publish these products in the future."

I can hardly believe that these things and others like them are happening! We always read bits and pieces about such things happening in corners, but now they are out in the open and snowballing down on everyone from all directions at once! And most people are completely unprepared to fight them because many come under the guise of being a good thing and, not knowing anything about spiritual deception, as you write in *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future,* people succumb.

P., New Jersey

Ed. comment: Our book, Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future, *has struck a responsive chord among Orthodox Christians as well as among many non-Orthodox, especially in America. Once again it is out of print, but a fourth printing is now being prepared (to be available in mid-summer), with revisions and additions in order to bring it up to date, and with material on new "Eastern" religious movements in the West.*

ARCHBISHOP JOHN MAXIMOVITCH

I thank you very much for number 76 of *The Orthodox Word* (with the beginning of the *Life of the Fathers* by St. Gregory of Tours). I seemed to see before me Archbishop John Maximovitch, whom we in our Orthodox Catholic Church of France consider as a saint; we hope that one day the Russian Church Outside of Russia will canonize him.

Archbishop John, whose spirit was universal, was interested in the West, and especially in our country of France, and I was very happy to read the chapters of St. Gregory of Tours in English.

Soon there will appear a book in French where the personality of Archbishop John will be presented at some length.

(Translated from French) B., France

BLESSED XENIA

Recently I was able to spend one short week in the Soviet Union, at the beginning of March. Of course, one cannot see much in one week. I visited Moscow and Petersburg, saw the churches and museums, felt the fear and sadness of the land, attended several active churches. I was particularly struck by the beggars in and around the churches, who solicit alms and offer their prayers for the benefactors, just as in times gone by.

The spiritual highlight of my trip was my visit to the grave of Blessed Xenia. Here was a holy place not defiled by the casual irreverence of ignorant tourists, but rather visited by pious people, despite the closed and broken-down chapel. I really felt the saint's presence, and, if I may say so, I shed warm tears of fervent prayer in the cold and icy snow. I softly chanted "With the saints give rest," and then the troparion and kontakion to a fool for Christ's sake, in anticipation of her glorification. I must confess that when I first read about Blessed Xenia, I was put off by the strangeness of her *podvig* (exploit), so alien to our modern minds. This year, however, I was drawn to her by her closeness to us, and I felt that I received her blessing at her grave. I took a few photographs which might interest you. The ground being completely ice-covered, I was unable to take any soil from the grave.

C., New Jersey

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